

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 02771 310817Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 310745Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1842
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T TEHRAN 2771

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MASS KU UR
SUBJ: GOK PURCHASE OF SOVIET MISSILES

REF KUWAIT 1592

1. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT USEFUL TO TRY AND INCLUDE IRAN IN POSSIBLE APPROACH TO KUWAIT OVER GOK PURCHASE OF SOVIET MISSILES. EVEN IF GOI INCLINED TO UNDERTAKE SUCH AN EFFORT, WHICH WE SERIOUSLY DOUBT, WE SUSPECT IT WOULD HAVE LITTLE OR NO LEVERAGE WITH KUWAIT. ONE SIGNIFICANT ATTENUATING FACTOR IS, OF COURSE, GOI LATE NOVEMBER 1976 SUBSTANTIAL PURCHASES OF SOVIET ARMS, INCLUDING STRELA MISSILES. FACT THAT DEMARCHE TARGET WOULD BE GROG (AND NOT STRELA) MISSILES WOULD NOT CHANGE OUR EXPECTATION ABOUT PROBABILITY OF NEGATIVE RESULTS.

2. ADDITIONALLY, GOI, WITH UNCERTAINTIES SHAH HAS ABOUT FUTURE US ARMS SALES POLICY AND HIS EXPRESSED DETERMINATION TO ACQUIRE ARMS JUDGED NECESSARY FOR LEGITIMATE GOI DEFENSE/
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SECURITY REQUIREMENTS IRRESPECTIVE OF SUPPLY SOURCE, WOULD LIKELY PERCEIVE NO ADVANTAGE FROM WORKING AGAINST POTENTIAL FUTURE IRANIAN SOURCE OF SUPPLY. CLEARLY IRAN DOES NOT WISH TO SEE USSR ENLARGE ITS POSITION IN AREA, BUT IF USSR, AS RESULT OF SALE TO KUWAIT, WERE TO UNDERTAKE MODERATING INFLUENCE ON IRAQ THIS WOULD BE PLUS FOR IRAN. FROM THAT STANDPOINT ONE MIGHT EVEN ARGUE THAT KUWAITI SECURITY IS

ENHANCED BY FROG ACQUISITION. POSSIBILITY OF USSR
MODERATING IRAQ AS OUTGROWTH OF SOVIET SALE TO KUWAIT PERHAPS
A PRIME GOK MOTIVATION FOR DEAL.

3. UNQUESTIONABLY FROG SALE TO KUWAIT WOULD SEEM UNWELCOME
DEVELOPMENT, BUT - IN GENERAL TERMS - IT SEEMS HARD TO ARGUE
THAT IT WILL FUEL AREA ARMS RACE SINCE, FOR EXAMPLE, IRAQ
ALREADY HAS FROG. NOR WOULD THAT ITSELF APPEAR TO BE
IMPEDIMENT TO ARAB-ISRAEL SETTLEMENT.

4. IN CONCLUSION, FROM WHERE WE SIT CHANCE OF SUCCESSFUL
DISSUASION APPEARS SLIM, AND WE DO NOT REALLY SEE USEFUL
IRANIAN ROLE IN SUCH EFFORT EVEN IF GOI WERE PREPARED TO
ASSIST (WHICH, AS NOTED ABOVE, WE DOUBT).
MIKLOS

SECRET

NNN

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